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DE RUEHBJ #3058 1280914
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FM AMEMBASSY BEIJING
TO UEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7600
INFO RUEHZN/ENVIRONMNT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COLLECTIVE
RUCPDOG/SDOC WASHDC
RUEHGH/AMCONSUL SHANGHAI 7571
RUEHSH/AMCONSUL SHENYANG 7940
RUEHCN/AMCONSUL CHENGDU 8264
RUEHGZ/AMCONSUL GUANGZHOU 2870
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 9310
RUEHIN/AIT TAIPEI 6442

UNCLAS BEIJING 003058

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
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STATE FOR OES/ETC - A. COVINGTON
STATE ALSO FOR OES/EGC/VALDEZ AND EAP/CM
DOE FOR INTERNATIONAL/PUMPHREY
USDOC FOR NOAA/OFFICE OF GLOBAL PROGRAMS
EPA FOR INTERNATIONAL - NGUYEN AND CHENG
STATE PASS TO CEQ CONNAUGHTON AND NSC PEEL

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: New Ministers of Water and Land Resources Named

11. (U) China announced the selection of Xu Shaoshi as the new Minister of Land and Resources and Chen Lei as Minister of Water Resources following confirmation by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress April 27. Minister Xu was previously Deputy Secretary General of the State Council, where he was a coordinator of the Strategic Economic Dialogue team on the Chinese side. He graduated from the Environment and Resources Department of Jilin University.

12. (U) Minister Chen returns to Beijing following two years as Executive Vice Chairman of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, the kind of brief provincial posting that would indicate that Chen was being groomed for future promotion. He is a hydraulic engineer with over 20 years of government experience, including ten at the Ministry of Water Resources. Minister Chen was previously Vice Minister of Water Resources from 2001 to 2005.

Comment

13. (SBU) Our contacts at MWR as well as on the NGO side said they do not believe Minister Chen, who has worked his way up MWR's ladder, will take a different track with the United States than that taken by his predecessor, former Minister Wang Shucheng, who had good relations with his U.S. government counterparts at the Environmental Protection Administration and the Bureau of Reclamation.

14. (SBU) We have little direct experience with Minister Xu; as SED coordinator, he primarily worked behind the scenes.

RANDT